

Buwal language

Buwal, also known as **Ma Buwal**, **Bual**, or **Gadala**, is an Afro-Asiatic language spoken in Cameroon in Far North Province in and around Gadala.^[1]

Phonology

Buwal	
<i>Gadala</i>	
Native to	Cameroon
Region	Far North Province
Native speakers	10,000 (2004) ^[1]
Language family	Afro-Asiatic <ul style="list-style-type: none">Chadic<ul style="list-style-type: none">Biu–Mandara<ul style="list-style-type: none">Daba (A.7)<ul style="list-style-type: none">North<ul style="list-style-type: none">Buwal
Language codes	
ISO 639-3	bhs
Glottolog	buwa1243 (http://glottolog.org/resource/language/id/buwa1243) ^[2]

Consonants

	<u>Labial</u>	<u>Alveolar</u>	<u>Lateral alveolar</u>	<u>Palatal</u>	<u>Velar</u>	<u>Labialized velar</u>	<u>Labial-velar</u>
<u>Nasal</u>	<u>m</u>	<u>n</u>			<u>ŋ</u>	<u>ŋ^w</u>	<u>ŋm</u>
<u>Voiceless plosive</u>	<u>p</u>	<u>t</u>			<u>k</u>	<u>k^w</u>	<u>kp</u>
<u>Voiced plosive</u>	<u>b</u>	<u>d</u>			<u>g</u>	<u>g^w</u>	<u>gb</u>
<u>Prenasalized plosive</u>	<u>^mb</u>	<u>ⁿd</u>			<u>^ŋg</u>	<u>^ŋg^w</u>	<u>^ŋ^mgb</u>
<u>Implosive</u>	<u>ɓ</u>	<u>ɗ</u>					
<u>Voiceless affricate</u>		<u>ts</u>					
<u>Voiced affricate</u>		<u>dz</u> <u>ⁿdz</u>					
<u>Voiceless fricative</u>	<u>f</u>	<u>s</u>	<u>ɬ</u>		<u>x</u>	<u>x^w</u>	
<u>Voiceless fricative</u>	<u>v</u>	<u>z</u>	<u>ɮ</u>		<u>ɣ</u>	<u>ɣ^w</u>	
<u>Flap</u>	<u>ɹ</u>	<u>r</u>					
<u>Approximant</u>			<u>l</u>	<u>j</u>		<u>w</u>	

The labiodental flap /ʋ/ is marginal, only occurring in two native Buwal words. The labial-velar plosives are also marginal; in particular, /kp/ only occurs in one word, the ideophone *kpaŋ*.

Buwal has the vowels /ə a/, which can occur in high, middle, or low tone. Each vowel has a variety of phonetic realizations. /ə/ can occur as [i u ɪ ʏ ʊ], and /a/ can occur as [e o ɛ œ ɐ ɔ]. The schwa can be analyzed as a solely epenthetic vowel. These vowels occur as rounded allophones when adjacent to a labialized consonant, and as front vowels when the word is palatalized.

Palatalization in Buwal occurs across an entire word, and also affects the affricate consonants /ts dz ʔdz/, which surface as [tʃ dʒ ʔdʒ] in a palatalized word. As a result, all of the vowels within a single word are either front or back, producing vowel harmony. An example of this contrast is between [mɛ̃ⁿdʷɛ̃ⁿ] 'rat' (underlyingly /māⁿdwán/), which is non-palatalized, and [mɛ̃ⁿvɛ̃ⁿdʷɛ̃ⁿ] (underlyingly /māvāⁿdvāⁿdāⁿ/) 'turtle', which is palatalized. This process does not affect loanwords, e.g. [nɛ̃ⁿbɛ̃ⁿm] 'oil' (from Fulfulde *nebbam*) or [lɛ̃ⁿkʷól] 'school' (from French *l'école*). Some loanwords have been modified to accommodate Buwal phonology, e.g. [séj] 'tea', from Fulfulde *sha'i*.^[3]

Notes

1. Buwal (<https://www.ethnologue.com/18/language/bhs/>) at *Ethnologue* (18th ed., 2015)
 2. Hammarström, Harald; Forkel, Robert; Haspelmath, Martin, eds. (2017). "Buwal" (<http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/buwa1243>). *Glottolog 3.0*. Jena, Germany: Max Planck Institute for the Science of Human History.
 3. Viljoen, Melanie Helen (2013). *A grammatical description of the Buwal language* (Ph.D. thesis). La Trobe University. [hdl:1959.9/513436](https://hdl.handle.net/1959.9/513436) (<https://hdl.handle.net/1959.9/513436>).
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